



# CHAPTER 9: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



*Future land use exercise conducted at a public workshop*

### **Introduction**

In order for a plan to be successfully implemented, it is critical to have meaningful public participation throughout the process. The input of the public as well as community leaders helps to create buy-in and consensus about the challenges and opportunities faced by Harrison County as well as the policy direction to address them. The community's vision and direction for the future is a direct result of this input and consensus. The Harrison County Comprehensive Plan process has included a significant amount of public participation opportunities through key person interviews, focus group meetings, steering committee meetings and public workshops. Each of the input techniques used and a summary of the results are included in this chapter.

### **Key Person/ Stakeholder Interviews**

Key person or stakeholder interviews can provide important feedback on issues, challenges or opportunities within the county. They allow the consultant team to gather information that might not be voiced in larger groups and allows interaction with community members that have a specialized knowledge of the county. Key person interviews were conducted with 17 individuals in February and March of 2008 at the Harrison County Community Foundation Building. The stakeholders were identified by the Planning Commission and Steering Committee; each was conducted as an informal one-on-one discussion. The highlights from these discussions are as follows:

### **Rural Character**

- Want to preserve rural character but have to allow for development.
- County has strong agricultural history.



### **Future Casino Revenue**

- Revenue could end at any time.
- Need other funding sources to ensure future.

### **Emergency Response**

- Plenty of fire departments; we have one in every township. Casino money helped buy trucks, etc. for all townships.
- EMS service is good but they need more money; we have better service than other counties.
- Police have good response. New Albany pays higher salaries; we train officers and then they go to New Albany. Have trouble keeping them here.
- EMS response time is good.

### **Lanesville Interchange Area**

- Would like to see Lanesville develop; it is the county's best potential but 20 years down the road.
- Lanesville interchange could bring in more.
- Would like more development in Lanesville.

### **Sewer**

- Want to build sewer system at Lanesville but no one there to pay bill.
- People don't want it because it will increase sewer bills monthly. Many are getting by with fairly new septic tank and they would have to pay money to hook into sewer.
- Southern Harrison is very Karst and can't handle septic in all areas.

### **Subdivision of Land**

- Dividing land is an issue.
- Building strip subdivisions along existing county roads – roads substandard, lack of services.
- Subdivision roads are not always designed for school buses.

### **Growth and Development**

- Subdivisions are easier to build adjacent to an existing subdivision.
- Condense people to where you have activities.
- Developing closer to town would prevent subdivision in nowhere.
- Development should respect old growth trees.



### **Attitude Towards Planning**

- Too many zoning rules. If want to sell property, you should be able to do it.
- More emphasis needed on setbacks, etc, but County should not tell landowners what to do with land. Should be able to sell any amount of land to develop.

### **Trade and Vocational Opportunities**

- Would like to see more lifelong learning and trade classes. Currently offering opportunities for computers and GED. Have joined up with Work One and it is doing well but expanded classes are needed.
- High school co-ops go to Prosser in New Albany; very little at schools.

### **Economic Development and Jobs**

- To attract people, we need jobs and schools.
- People have to leave for jobs.
- Need industry to help with tax base. Industrial park in South Harrison.

### **Transportation**

- Roads upgraded nicely with casino funding.
- Need roadway connection to Southern Harrison County. SR 135 to Elizabeth – need to connect with new road. Connect to Caesars and residents.
- Current interchange does not serve very well.
- Connector roads need to serve new interchange.
- Improve SR 337 to interchange and SR 135 (four-lane road).
- Bridge would be good thing in years to come.
- Bridge doesn't have much of a chance.
- Pump to Lanesville interchange.
- Lanesville could bring economic development.
- No paved shoulder. No white lines on side.

### **Accessibility of the Ohio River**

- River is a big asset but no one worries about it. No railroad down by river, such as in Brandenburg.
- Don't have boat landing.



### **Parks**

- Good but could improve.
- Don't have lake in southern part of county.
- Pools need replacement.
- Need toilets at Hayswood in Corydon.
- Parks are needed throughout the county.

### **Karst Landscape**

- Karst landscape is an issue for future development.
- Sensitive environment that needs to be protected.

### **Schools**

- Schools are good but need help – declining population in North Harrison.
- Bedroom community is a bad thing for the county (need taxes to support schools).
- Schools are losing population.

### **Focus Group Meetings**

Four focus groups were conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process. The four topical discussions were focused on transportation, the possibility of a new Ohio River bridge, growth, and small towns. Each focus group consisted of eight to nine members of the community that had unique knowledge or input related to one of the focus group topics. The consultant team facilitated each discussion.

The transportation and Ohio River bridge focus groups were both held on February 13, 2008 and the growth and small towns focus groups were held on February 28, 2008; all focus group meetings were held at the Harrison County Government Building Annex. The major discussion points were as follows:

### **Transportation**

- New I-64 Interchange at Corydon
  - new interchange on west side of Corydon is a top transportation priority
  - Could tie into industrial park, more development
  - Located at Western most portion of County that could develop



- Other Corydon Road Improvements
  - Ramsey Road should be widened between SR 62 and Quarry Road
  - Quarry Road should be widened between SR 135 and SR 337r
  - Road improvements on south side of Corydon near schools are desirable
- Lanesville Interchange Area
  - Sewers are very important to development
  - Problem of not knowing how much capacity they need
- New General Aviation Airport
  - Potential airport along Corydon-Ramsey Road that would serve business community.
  - Have aviation board (inactive)
  - Would serve small corporate aircraft. Seen as essential in luring corporations. Lucas would be one example user.
- Industrial Development near Corydon
  - Lucas owns rail spur down to Tower Automotive building from Norfolk Southern mainline at Corydon Junction. They also own a spur into downtown Corydon,
  - County owns 50' right-of-way north of AO Smith (Tower Automotive Building), which is available for rail
- Mauckport Area
  - Fort Knox improvements will increase traffic on SR 135 Bridge
  - Possible extension of rail to Mauckport for ethanol plant
  - Desire for Ohio River port at Mauckport
- New Ohio River Bridge
  - Doing study for possible public-private partnership on Ohio River Bridge to Louisville.
  - If new bridge is built, connector road to I-64 could be limited access.
- Trails
  - A committee is working to get a trail from Hayswood Nature Reserve to the YMCA
  - Trail in South Harrison from Elizabeth to Laconia

### **Ohio River Bridge**

- Need for the Bridge



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- County has not taken stance on the bridge. They are currently just monitoring the discussions.
- We have I-64, which supports jobs. We don't need economic development in southern part of county.
  - Need to show it on the map in order to deal with planning and zoning issues
  - Bridge will be for traffic through Harrison. Harrison will not be destination.
- Development caused by bridge
  - Karst will limit development
  - Need to designate commercial where we think bridge will come across, then residential around that.
  - Need compact development.
- Alignment/Connection Issues
  - P3 probably a longshot--local
  - If local connection, wouldn't want to be where Gene Snyder may someday be. Probably SR 211 would be best place for local connection across river.
  - Road to Lanesville should be limited access to control development.
  - connection is more likely
  - Best thing to do is put "circle/blob" and don't encourage "big" development there. A mile wide corridor could be designated for protection.

### **Growth**

- Quantity of growth
  - 5,000 people is fairly conservative growth over the next 20 years
  - Driver of growth is the expansion of wastewater (New Salisbury / I-64 corridor)
  - Floyd County is pretty much built-out. Residential growth comes right up to the Harrison County line.
  - Should plan for 20 percent increase by 2030
- Density
  - Current density in Harrison County is approximately one household per acre.
  - Density should be closer to 1 household per 1/2 or 1/3 acre.
  - Rural character is important to the county.



- Location
  - Sewers drive the location of growth
  - Sometimes development proposals should be turned down and “let the better development come along.”
- Casino Revenue
  - Casino revenue is in question over the long term
  - Tax revenue of casino is small when compared to the potential growth at the two interchanges (Lanesville and proposed I-64).

### Small Towns

The towns and discussion points listed below pertain to those towns that had a resident present at the focus group meeting held on February 28, 2008.

- Lanesville
  - Population: 600 (census: 614)
  - Can’t grow water system (land locked); sewer plant capacity operating at 33%
  - School has “kept the town alive,” Very important to the community
- New Amsterdam
  - Population: 20 (census: 1)
  - In floodplain on Ohio River
  - Very few young people
- Palmyra
  - Population (census): 633
  - Capacity of sewer system operating at 35%
  - Few young people
  - Assisted living facility; senior apartments being built (28 units)
- Mauckport
  - Population (census): 83
  - Only paved boat ramp in county
- Laconia
  - Population: 39 (census: 29)
  - “Junk yards” are a problem
  - Coffee shop 20-30 people each morning



*Elizabeth*



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- Secretary / Clerk Treasurer. Could not fill position with a Laconia resident.  
Clerk Treasurer is from Elizabeth
- Crandall
  - Population: 157 (census: 131)
  - No local businesses (last business closed a few months ago)
  - Post office (coffee each morning)
  - No sewer (septic systems)
- What is the future of your town?
  - New Amsterdam  
One half of the town is in floodplain
  - Mauckport  
Small possibility of growth outside of floodplain  
1997 flood (can't rebuild)  
Campground possibility
  - Laconia  
Town lost school in 1958 with a negative impact on town  
Industry in Corydon and sewers will drive growth  
No business growth. Town consists primarily of residents.
  - Palmyra  
Houses on the market for long time  
People want to live close to their jobs due to high gas prices
- Lanesville
  - Growth is a function of I-64 growth
  - I-64 commercial growth and residential growth in surrounding area
  - Commuters will move in (30-40 years of age)
- Other Issues
  - Hospital
  - Need better quality health care physicians and more doctors
  - Population growth will attract new doctors.
  - Jobs
  - Entry level jobs are hard to find
  - Good paying jobs are hard to find (e.g. Ford, auto manufacturing)
  - Casino
  - Infrastructure/capital improvements
  - Revenue from casino is what is keeping many small towns afloat.





## **Steering Committee Meetings**

A steering committee was formed to oversee and guide the development of the Harrison County Comprehensive Plan. Twenty-five individuals representing a cross-section of the community were identified by the Plan Commission to serve on the committee. The committee met five times. The first meeting was held on December 13, 2007 at the Harrison County Government Building Annex. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the Steering Committee members to the project, discuss the planning process, review existing conditions, and discuss preliminary issues. A visioning exercise was conducted to provide guidance on the county's overall vision and goals. The results from the visioning exercise are as follows:

Items from a provided list identified by Steering Committee Members as desirable to have in the county:

Table 9-1a: Steering Committee Survey

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Not Desirable</b>
Historic Preservation	10	0
Housing & Services for All Age Groups	10	0
Walkable Neighborhoods	10	0
Landscaped Corridors	8	0
Single-Family Homes	8	0
Vibrant Downtown	8	0

Items from a provided list identified by Steering Committee Members as NOT desirable or important for Harrison County:

Table 9-1b: Steering Committee Survey

<b>Idea</b>	<b>Desirable</b>	<b>Not Desirable</b>
Adult-Oriented Entertainment/Business	1	10
Manufactured Housing	1	6
Narrow Streets	0	6
Strip Shopping Centers	2	5
Big Box Retail	1	5
Mega Churches	1	5
Surface Parking Lots	1	5



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A second exercise to identify the top issues for the comprehensive plan to address was also conducted at the first Steering Committee meeting. The top issues were:

- Growth
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Natural Resources
- Zoning/ Subdivision Regulation
- Schools

The remaining steering committee meetings were held on February 28, 2008, April 3, 2008, May 8, 2008 and July 10, 2008. The second and third meetings focused on reviews of the market analysis, vision, goals and objectives. During the fourth meeting in May, the Steering Committee considered alternative land use scenarios and reviewed the proposed Transportation/ Thoroughfare Plan. The final meeting was held to review the draft plan document.

### **Public Workshops**

Gathering input from the public early in the process is critical to the success of a comprehensive plan. For the Harrison County Comprehensive Plan, two of these early workshops were held to solicit input from the community and raise awareness of the planning process. These meetings were held on January 17, 2008 at South Harrison High School and January 31, 2008 North Harrison High School. Thirty-one people attended the first meeting and 25 people attended the second. The workshops



*Participants at a public workshop*

consisted of a brief presentation by the consulting team about comprehensive planning and planning trends and a series of four exercises to solicit input about the county's future.

Before the meeting started, attendees were asked to identify the top three issues they felt Harrison County faced in the next twenty years. A summary of the top issues includes:

- Growth
- Economic Development
- Natural Environment
- Transportation
- Education





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- Housing
- Community Facilities
- Rural Character
- Planning and Zoning
- Government





The second exercise was an Image Preference Survey where participants were shown 20 different images of community features and asked to rank them from -5 (strongly negative) to +5 (strongly positive). The images were later discussed by the group to determine specific likes and dislikes. The images and associated comments are presented below from highest to lowest rated:

Table 9-2: Public Workshop Image Preference Survey

Image	Avg. Score	Comments
	4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Rural character</li> <li>+ No pollution; Beautiful trees</li> <li>+ Quiet, peaceful setting</li> <li>+ "Reminds me of where I grew up"</li> <li>+ Road is paved</li> <li>+ "Makes you step back from busy four lane highway."</li> </ul>
	3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Rural character</li> <li>+ Calm, peaceful</li> <li>+ "Looks like my house."</li> </ul>







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	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Healthy lifestyles</li> <li>+ Safe; Inviting; Informative</li> <li>+ Floodwall – maximizing the use</li> <li>+ Green; Trailhead; Popular</li> <li>- Taking up the waterfront</li> <li>- Nothing to pay for the upkeep except tax dollars, maintenance</li> <li>- Looks like the entrance to a subdivision</li> </ul>
	3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Commerce on the water</li> <li>+ Place you would gravitate toward on the water</li> <li>+ Would like to eat there</li> <li>+ Beautiful setting</li> <li>- Takes up the waterfront</li> </ul>
	2.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ “Like the way it looks... quaint and friendly.”</li> <li>+ “I would like to eat there”</li> <li>+ Possibly locally owned</li> <li>- Doesn’t fit in.</li> <li>- Too crowded. Need more room.</li> </ul>
	2.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Charming; Pretty</li> <li>+ Encouraging local produce and agriculture</li> <li>+ Working family farm</li> <li>+ Homegrown</li> <li>+ Productive</li> </ul>



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	2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Maximizing natural resources</li> <li>+ Inviting walkway</li> <li>+ Well developed</li> <li>+ Good planning</li> <li>- Sad – riprap</li> <li>- Just leave it natural – more enjoyable</li> </ul>
	2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Sidewalks</li> <li>+ Nice, clean, well kept neighborhood.</li> <li>+ Like the homes</li> <li>+ “Downtown America”</li> <li>+ Place for kids to play</li> <li>+ Neighborhood rather than a subdivision</li> <li>- “Too crowded...stacked people”</li> </ul>
	2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Kids need something to do</li> <li>+ Cultural and economic draw</li> <li>+ Need recreational facilities</li> <li>+ Need to plan areas for the whole community.</li> <li>- Reminded of Louisville’s problems with skate parks.</li> </ul>
	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Nice house; Well kept</li> <li>+ High value – more taxes</li> <li>- Garages should be setback, on side, or in back</li> <li>- Three cars translates into more congestion</li> <li>- Levittown of the 2000’s – all the same</li> <li>- Clearing forest for homes</li> </ul>



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	2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Mitigating negative impacts</li> <li>+ Reuse</li> <li>+ Doesn't appear to be regulated</li> <li>+ "Me when I was a kid"</li> <li>+ Unique</li> <li>- Dangerous (kids)</li> </ul>
	1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Farm machinery in a farm community</li> <li>+ Necessary evil in a farming community</li> <li>+ Paved shoulder</li> <li>+ Accommodating</li> <li>+ Farm equipment coexisting with cars</li> <li>+ Still maintaining a rural setting</li> <li>+ Working harmony within a farming community</li> </ul>
	1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ It's paved</li> <li>- No shoulder</li> <li>- What if you have car trouble?</li> <li>- "A to B quickly but doesn't accommodate multi modes of transportation."</li> <li>- "If picture was taken in the fall, you may have a more positive response."</li> </ul>
	1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Represents something needed in the community</li> <li>+ Industry; Tax base; Jobs (higher paying jobs)</li> <li>+ High standards; Neat</li> <li>- Ugly</li> </ul>







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	0.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ High standards</li> <li>+ "If you're going to have a subdivision, that's the way it should be."</li> <li>+ "Orderly, paved, not sprawled"</li> <li>+ Curb and gutters; Not in the country</li> <li>- "Move back to Louisville if you want this."</li> <li>- Packed in too tight</li> <li>- Nothing for kids to enjoy</li> <li>- Have to take the car to get anywhere.</li> </ul>
	-0.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Looks convenient</li> <li>+ Tax revenue</li> <li>+ Orderly shopping center</li> <li>- Traffic congestion</li> <li>- Lack of character</li> <li>- "We have these 20-30 minutes away. Don't need here."</li> </ul>
	-1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ "Would rather have 20 homes take 20 acres than 20 homes take 200 acres."</li> <li>- Subdivisions need to be closer to town where urban services are.</li> <li>- Encroachment on homestead</li> <li>- Possibility of clear cutting trees</li> <li>- Utilizing prime tillable land for development</li> <li>- Sprawl; No mixed uses</li> </ul>
	-2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not visually pleasing – utilities, signage, etc.</li> <li>- No continuity</li> <li>- Congested; Nothing but traffic</li> <li>- No planning; No regulations</li> <li>- Better with planning</li> <li>- Hodgepodge</li> <li>- "No matter where you go, there you are."</li> </ul>



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	-2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Empty parking lot</li><li>- Blacktop instead of green</li><li>- Not landscaped</li><li>- Parking is important, but not that important</li><li>- Poorly planned</li></ul>
	-2.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Billboards and utilities are an eyesore</li><li>- Clutter</li><li>- Up facing lights (negative)</li></ul>



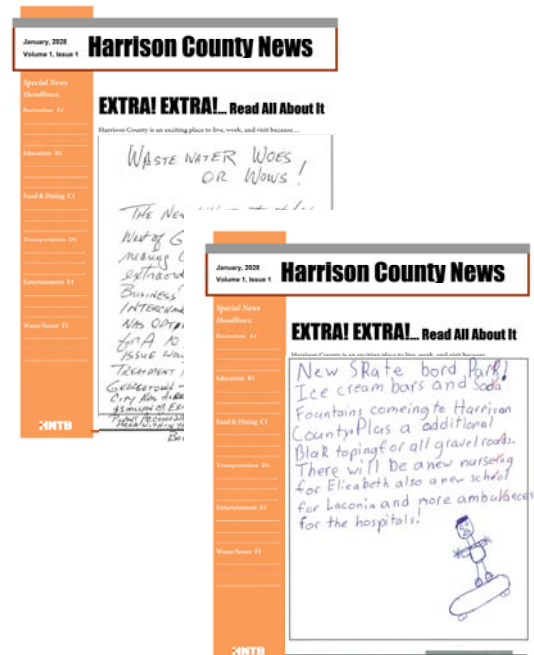


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The third exercise allowed participants to determine the location and quantity of future development. Attendees were divided into small groups and asked to place dots representing residential, commercial, industrial, and parks/ open space on a map of the county and to use markers to indicate new roads, road widening, or other needed road improvements. The minimum amount of development that they were asked to place was based on the baseline Census population projections for the county for 2030. The maximum amount of development was based on an aggressive projection of the 2030 population. The resulting maps were used by the consulting team and Steering Committee as input to develop the future land use map.

The final exercise, “Extra, Extra, Read All About It,” allowed participants to be the editor of the newspaper twenty years in the future. This visioning exercise allows the attendees to express where they would like Harrison County to be in the future. The most common themes include:

- Recreation
- Education
- Transportation
- Entertainment
- Economic Development
- Food and Dining
- Housing
- Community Facilities
- Water/ Sewer



Examples from “Extra, Extra!... Read All About It” exercise

### **Public Open Houses**

Public open house events were held on June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The open houses were held in different geographic areas of the county (north & south) for the convenience of residents. The purpose of each open house was to allow citizens to analyze and react to the draft plan elements. The vision, goals and objectives as well as the draft future land use and transportation maps were presented; comments were solicited through various questions and individual exercises. Each



Participants at a public open house



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presented; comments were solicited through various questions and individual exercises. Each participant was asked to agree or disagree with the goals of the comprehensive plan; 95 percent of participants agreed with the goals of the plan and only five percent disagreed. Concerns of those disagreeing were discussed and taken into account for the final draft of the plan.

### **Public Hearings**

A public hearing was held by the Planning Commission, in accordance with Indiana Code, to adopt the plan. This meeting was held on October 2, 2008 at the Harrison County Courthouse.

The Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Harrison County Commissioners on November 17, 2008.